



## Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.  
*Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.

## skunk cabbage

*Symplocarpus foetidus*

Kingdom: Plantae  
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta - flowering  
plants

## Features

Skunk cabbage is a perennial herb. It has no stem. The flowers are located close to the ground on a thickened structure surrounded by a purple to greenish sheath. The flowers release a foul odor that attracts flies which pollinate the flowers. The smooth leaves, which may be up to 2 1/2 feet long and nearly one foot wide, are produced after flowering.

## Natural History

Skunk cabbage grows in seeps and other areas with springs. It flowers from March through April. Pioneers used skunk cabbage to treat respiratory problems, rheumatism, dropsy, ringworm, skin sores, and muscle spasms.

## Habitats

bottomland forests

## Iowa Status

uncommon; native

## Iowa Range

eastern third of Iowa